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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/682,107	07/20/2001	Jefferson M. Kommers	VIGN1270	5626

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EXAMINER
AL HASHEMI, SANA A

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2171	

DATE MAILED: 03/11/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

| Office Action Summary | Application No. 09/682,107 | Applicant(s) KOMMERS ET AL. |
| | Examiner Sana Al-Hashemi | Art Unit 2171 | |

-- *The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address* --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE _3_ MONTH(S) FROM
THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.
- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____ .

2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL.**   2b) ☒ This action is non-final.

3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle,* 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) ☒ Claim(s) _1-24_ is/are pending in the application.

    4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) ☒ Claim(s) _1-24_ is/are rejected.

7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a)☐ approved b)☐ disapproved by the Examiner.

    If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

    a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

      1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

      2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____ .

      3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

    * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

    a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _3_ .

4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ .

5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) ☐ Other: .

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that

form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Caid et

al. (US Patent No. 5,619,709).

1.   Regarding Claims 1, 7, 13, and 19, Caid discloses a method of searching for a

plurality of information objects comprising:

receiving a first signal that includes or is used to form a first query, wherein the

first query includes a first keyword within a hierarchy (see column 4, lines 59-61, Caid);

expanding the first query to a second query, wherein the second query includes

the first keyword and a second keyword within the hierarchy (see column 4, lines 61-65,

Caid);

searching the database using the second query (see column 5, lines 26-36, Caid);

finding a first identifier for a first: information object that corresponds to the

second query, wherein the first information object is part of the plurality of information

objects (see column 5, lines 37-48, Caid).

2.   Regarding Claims 2, and 14, Caid discloses a method wherein:

the database comprises a plurality of information objects including the first

information object and a plurality of keywords including the first keyword and the second

keyword (see column 5, lines 55-58, Caid);

each information object within the plurality of information objects has at least one related

keyword from the plurality of keywords (see column 5, lines 37-48, Caid);

the hierarchy defines a relationship among the keywords within the plurality of

keywords (see column 5, lines 59-62, Caid).

3.   Regarding Claims 3, and 15, Caid discloses a method further comprising:

automatically determining a first association score between the first keyword and the

second keyword based at least in part upon their positions within the hierarchy (see

column 13, lines 1-8, Caid).

4.   Regarding Claims 4, and 16, Caid discloses a method further comprising

automatically determining a second association score between the first keyword and the

third keyword based upon their positions within the hierarchy, wherein expanding the

first query is performed such that the second query does not include the third keyword

(see Fig. 4, Caid).

5.   Regarding Claims 5, and 17, Caid discloses a method further comprising filtering

at least some of the information objects within the plurality of information objects to

meet a defined criterion (see column 13, lines 40-46, Caid).

6.   Regarding Claims 6, and 18, Caid discloses a method further comprising:

determining an association score between each keyword within the first query and each

keyword within the second query based at least in part upon their positions within the

hierarchy; and calculating a first relevance score for the first information object, wherein:

at least one first relevancy rating is obtained for the first information object (see

column 11, lines 11-15,Caid);

the first relevance score includes a first sum divided by a number of keywords

within the second query (see column 11, lines 11-15,Caid);

the first sum includes a first summation of first products (see column 11, lines 16-

20, Caid);

and for each keyword within the second query, its first product includes a

corresponding first association score and a corresponding first relevance rating (see

column 4, lines 40-45, Caid).

7.   Regarding Claims 8, and 20, Caid discloses a method further comprising:

searching a database using the second query, wherein an information object is

associated with the second keyword but is riot associated with the first keyword (see

column 6, lines 27-30, Caid);

and sending a second signal that includes an object identifier for the information

object (see column 6, lines 30-37, Caid)..

8.   Regarding Claims 9, 11, and 23, Caid discloses a method wherein:

the first keyword, the second keyword, and a third keyword are represented by a

first node, a second node, and a third node, respectively, within a keyword hierarchy (see

Fig. 14, Caid);

the method further comprises determining a first association score between the

first node and the second node and a second association score between the first node and

the third node, wherein the first and second association scores indicate that the first node

is more closely associated with the second node than the third node (see column 13, lines

1-8, Caid);

and expanding is performed such that the second query does not include the third

keyword (see column 6, lines 40-46, Caid).

9.   Regarding Claim 10, Caid discloses a method automatically determining an

association score between the first keyword and the second keyword based at least in

part upon their positions within the hierarchy (see column 13, lines 1-8, Caid).

10.   Regarding Claims 12, and 24, Caid discloses a method wherein automatically

determining the association score includes determining a first common ancestor (see

column 9, liens 55-59, Caid).

11.   Regarding Claim 21, Caid disclose a data processing system readable medium

wherein:

the first keyword, the second keyword, and a third keyword are represented by a

first node, a second node, and a third node, respectively, within a keyword hierarchy (see

Fig. 2A, Caid);

the method further comprises determining a first association score between the

first node and the second node and a second association score between the first node and

the third node (see Fig. 2B, Caid);

wherein the first and second association scores indicate that the first node is more

closely associated with the second node than the third node (see Fog. 2C, Caid); and

expanding is performed such that the second query does not include the third

keyword (see Fig. 2F, Caid).

12.   Regarding Claim 22, Caid discloses a data processing system readable medium

the method further comprises automatically determining an association score between the

first keyword and the second keyword based at least in part upon their positions within

the hierarchy (see column 13, lines 1-8, Caid).

Points of Contact

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the

examiner should be directed to: Sana Al-Hashemi whose telephone number is (703) 305-

4881. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:30

PM.. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's

supervisor, Safet Metjahic, can be reached on (703) 308-1436. Any response to this

office action should be mailed to: The Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks,

Washington, D.C. 20231. Or telefax at phone number (703) 746-9098. For formal or

draft communications, please label "PROSPOSED" or "DRAFT". Hand-delivered

response should be brought to

Crystal Park II, 2121 Crystal Drive, 6th Floor Receptionist, Arlington, Virginia. 22202.

Sana Al-Hashemi
Patent Examiner
Technology Center 2100
February 28, 2003

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